

The
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EMA Report

NEWSLETTER FOR THE FRANKLIN COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & HOMELAND SECURITY

VOLUME I, NUMBER 5

Spring Severe Weather Awareness Week - March 25-31

Residents Urged To Review Disaster Plans, Safety Measures



Courtesy OCSWA

National Flood Safety Week March 18-24

The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness (OCSWA) encourages all citizens to update their disaster preparedness plans (see page 4) and practice the safety measures necessary to protect themselves and their property from tornadoes, floods and other severe weather hazards that affect Ohio.

Many communities will experience some sort of flooding after winter snow thaws, spring rains or heavy thunderstorms.

Floods can be slow or fast-rising, but generally develop over a period of days. Flash floods can occur with little or no warning and can reach full peak in only a matter of minutes.

Courtesy OEMA

Ohio Tornado Drill Planned Wednesday, March 28, 9:50 AM

COLUMBUS, OH – Warning sirens will sound and a test message will broadcast on the Emergency Alert System as part of a statewide tornado drill, Wednesday, March 28 at 9:50 AM. The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness (OCSWA) suggests all homes, businesses and schools practice their tornado drills during this time.

As Ohio prepares for the arrival of spring and the inclement weather associated with warmer temperatures, OCSWA encourages everyone to review their disaster preparedness plans and practice them.

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FEMA: New Floodplain Maps Focus on Blacklick, George's Creeks

COLUMBUS, OHIO — Proposed 100 year floodplain maps for Franklin County have revealed changes triggered by new flood studies.

On Jan. 30, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) publicly presented the updated maps which include new measurements made by the Franklin County engineer's office.

Matt Brown, a planner for the Franklin County Department of Development, said the new maps incorporate information obtained from aerial photography and redefine floodplain boundaries based on topography, as well as flood studies of area creeks - including Blacklick Creek and George's Creek in the Southeast area.

Village of Groveport engineer consultant Steve Farst of *Evans, Mechwart, Hambleton, and Tilton* stated that it is FEMA's intent to initiate a 90-day appeals period in about four to six weeks, during which time the public and local officials can present information to support requests to change the Preliminary Revised Flood Insurance Study (FIS) and Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM).

At the end of the appeals period, FEMA evaluates the requests. Approved changes are shown on the final version of the revised FIS and FIRM.

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Elected in November 2004, Commissioner Paula Brooks served as 2006 President of the Franklin County Board of Commissioners. She has had a long career in both public service and the business world, including eight years as a City Council member.

In 2000, the Secretary of Defense appointed Brooks as a civilian advisor on the Federal Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS). With 3-Star status, her policy advice encompassed troop readiness and advice related to women and military families for both enlisted and officer members of the services.

"On September 11, 2001, emergency management took on new meaning for all Americans," Commissioner Brooks said. "But unfortunately for me I will never forget learning that several of my friends fled the Pentagon, literally running for their lives; as well as another friend who fled the World Trade buildings, where she had worked at Goldman Sachs.

"We honor the memories of those who did not make it, including General Tim Maude of the U.S. Army, whom I met through my service with DACOWITS. That day America changed its course and we now know that emergencies of an unthinkable magnitude can and will arise. That is why I have, and continue to participate directly as a county commissioner, in the Emergency Management Agency and various meetings and exercises that our professional first responders conduct.

"I am very proud that our firemen, police, deputies and EMA received the highest readiness designation policy from the US Department of Homeland Security last year. I look forward to continued excellence from our team members whether we represent cities, counties, townships or villages here in Franklin County, as well as our region. I like to say "We are ALL Franklin County," and in this regard, I believe, we are meeting our mission of readiness for ALL."



Commissioner Paula Brooks

Editor's Note: Each edition we feature an Executive Committee member and profile their duties and vision for FCEM&HS. Dr. Allen Smith is the alternate.

NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) depends on support from the general public in two key programs: **SKYWARN Spotters** and **Cooperative Observers (COOP)**. In both these programs, volunteers provide vital, real-time observational data. SKYWARN spotters provide essential information for all types of environmental hazards, however, the main responsibility of a spotter is to report severe local storms. Since the program started in the 1970s, SKYWARN information, coupled with Doppler radar technology, improved satellite data and other resources, has enabled NWS to issue more timely and accurate warnings for tornadoes, severe thunderstorms and flash floods.

Anyone with access to a telephone or HAM radio can join the SKYWARN program. Spotters can also submit reports through the internet on their local NWS Forecast Office web site. Spotters include police and fire personnel, dispatchers, EMS workers, public utility workers and other citizens interested in weather. NWS encourages staff at hospitals, schools, churches, nursing homes and other key locales to become a spotter.

COOP is the Nation's weather and climate observing network of, by and for the people. More than 11,000 volunteers take observations on farms, in urban and suburban areas, National Parks, seashores and mountaintops.

For more information contact your local forecast office: <http://www.stormready.noaa.gov/contact.htm>

Upcoming Meetings

March 6	10AM	Improvised Explosive Device Planning	5300 Strawberry Farms Blvd.
March 7	10AM	Homeland Security Advisory Committee	5300 Strawberry Farms Blvd.
March 12	9AM	Advisory Council	5300 Strawberry Farms Blvd.
March 13	9AM	Franklin County Fire Chiefs Association	5300 Strawberry Farms Blvd.
March 14	2-3PM	Public Information Network	5300 Strawberry Farms Blvd.
March 20	11:30AM	Citizen Corps	5300 Strawberry Farms Blvd.
March 20	2-3PM	Special Needs Population Non-English Speaking	5300 Strawberry Farms Blvd.
March 21	9AM	9-1-1 Managers	5300 Strawberry Farms Blvd.
March 21	9AM	Executive Committee	5300 Strawberry Farms Blvd.

Upcoming Training-Exercise

March 17	9-12 Noon	Weather Spotters Training	5300 Strawberry Farms Blvd.
March 28	9:50 AM	Statewide Tornado Drill	



Gary L. Holland, Director

Jim Leonard, EM-Recovery/Communications

Art Baker, EM Warning/EOC

Robert Crockett, PIO/Community Education Outreach

www.franklincountyohio.gov/emahs

Donna Monell, Deputy Director

Jan Bartel, Finance

Pam Tickle, Administrative Assistant

Amy Green, EM Planner



Floodplain Maps

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"Once the final FIS and FIRM are made official," said Farst, "and are released, printed and distributed, the new information will be used by local officials for floodplain management purposes and as a basis for administration of the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA indicated the new maps will probably be in effect about a year from now."

Flood insurance

Brown said federal law requires flood insurance for people who have a mortgage on a structure that's in the floodplain. He said individuals in this situation would most likely be notified by their mortgage institution that they must obtain flood insurance.

"If there's no loan, flood insurance is not required," said Brown. "But it's still recommended for safety and well being."

For information about flood insurance visit the following Web sites: www.fema.gov and www.floodsmart.gov.

Floodplains in the Southeast area

The new maps, which can be found at www.franklincountyohio.gov/development under the floodplain section, show significant acreage added as floodplain along Old Hamilton Road in Groveport; along George's Creek near U.S. 33; south of Winchester Pike near Ebright Road; and north of Winchester Pike about halfway between Brice Road and Shannon Road. It also shows new floodplains designated west and northwest of Pickerington Ponds.

Parts of Blacklick Estates, which had been designated as being in a floodplain, will be removed from floodplain status.

New floodplains in Groveport

According to the new maps, it appears two fields on either side of Old Hamilton Road that have long been known to hold water, the Groveport water plant, the village's well field, and maybe Cruiser Park are among lands designated in the new floodplain.

"This new designation will not affect the operation of any of these facilities," said Groveport Village Administrator Jon Crusey.

Regarding potential future development along Old Hamilton Road, Crusey said, "If the new floodplain maps become effective there will be more development/floodplain requirements that will have to be met by the developers of these properties for future developments."

Crusey noted that Old Hamilton Road also includes some existing homes and businesses, but he is not sure of the number of existing homes that may be affected by the new floodplain maps.

Farst said Groveport officials are reviewing the Preliminary Revised FIS and FIRM and the specific map panels that affect the community.

The staff plans to advise council and the public regarding recommendations as well as discuss the potential impact the proposed revised FIS and FIRM may have on the community at a future Groveport Village Council meeting.

Courtesy Rick Palsgrove, Columbus Messenger

Tornado Drill

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Whether practicing a tornado drill or sheltering during a severe storm, the OCSWA encourages all to **DUCK**:

D – Go DOWN to the lowest level

U – Get UNDER something sturdy

C – COVER your head

K – KEEP in shelter until the storm has passed



Other important tornado safety tips include:

- ☐ Knowing the difference between a **tornado watch** and a **tornado warning**. A tornado watch means weather conditions are favorable for a tornado to develop. Stay aware of changing weather patterns; prepare to take shelter. A tornado warning means that a funnel cloud or tornado has occurred or been sighted. A warning indicates the need to take immediate action to protect life and property.
- ☐ Tune in to one of the following for up-to-date weather information: NOAA Weather Radio, local television station or cable television (Ohio News Network or The Weather Channel), local radio station.
- ☐ Seek shelter in the lowest area of a building or home. The safest place to be during a tornado is a basement or under a basement's stairs. If a basement or cellar is not available, seek shelter in a small, central room such as a bathroom or closet.
- ☐ If you are in a mobile home or vehicle, seek shelter immediately to the lowest level of a nearby building. If there is no building nearby, lie down in a low spot. Use your arms and hands to protect your head.

To view the spring preparedness guide go to: www.ema.ohio.gov, Severe Weather Awareness.

Courtesy OCSWA

FAMILY DISASTER PLAN

Families should be prepared for all hazards that could affect their area. NOAA's National Weather Service, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the American Red Cross urge every family to develop a family disaster plan.

Where will your family be when disaster strikes? They could be anywhere—at work, at school, or in the car. How will you find each other? Will you know if your children are safe? Disaster may force you to evacuate your neighborhood or confine you to your home. What would you do if basic services—water, gas, electricity, or telephones—were cut off?

Follow these basic steps to develop a family disaster plan...

I. Gather information about hazards.

Contact your local National Weather Service office, emergency management office, and American Red Cross chapter. Find out what type of disasters could occur and how you should respond. Learn your community's warning signals and evacuation plans.

II. Meet with your family to create a plan.

Discuss the information you have gathered. Pick two places to meet: a spot outside your home for an emergency, such as fire, and a place away from your neighborhood in case you can't return home. Choose an out-of-state friend as your "family check-in contact" for everyone to call if the family gets separated. Discuss what you would do if advised to evacuate.

III. Implement your plan.

(1) Post emergency telephone numbers by phones; (2) Install safety features in your house, such as smoke detectors and fire extinguishers; (3) Inspect your home for potential hazards (such as items that can move, fall, break, or catch fire) and correct them; (4) Have your family learn basic safety measures, such as CPR and first aid; how to use a fire extinguisher; and how and when to turn off water, gas, and electricity in your home; (5) Teach children how and when to call 911 or your local Emergency Medical Services number; (6) Keep enough supplies in your home to meet your needs for at least three days. Assemble a disaster supplies kit with items you may need in case of an evacuation. Store these supplies in sturdy, easy-to-carry containers, such as backpacks or duffle bags. Keep important family documents in a waterproof container. Keep a smaller disaster supplies kit in the trunk of your car.

IV. Practice and maintain your plan.

Ask questions to make sure your family remembers meeting places, phone numbers, and safety rules. Conduct drills. Test your smoke detectors monthly and change the batteries two times each year. Test and recharge your fire extinguisher(s) according to manufacturer's instructions. Replace stored water and food every 6 months. Contact your local National Weather Service office, American Red Cross chapter, or local office of emergency management for a copy of "Your Family Disaster Plan."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Weather Service